





“For most Iowans, the key to creating personal wealth begins with the purchase of their first home. It is the largest investment that most people will ever make.” This is how Lt. Governor Sally Pederson began her remarks to the audience at Title Guaranty’s first annual conference. Following are excerpts from her speech.

“But the value of home ownership goes beyond personal economics. Home ownership helps promote stable neighborhoods, where people feel rooted and vested in their communities. Stable and strong communities are what make Iowa—and America—able to pass on to the next generation our essential values—values that include the importance of being a good neighbor.

This is as true today as it was 100 years ago. The importance of “owning a home of your own” is something Iowans have long understood. Even in our early history as a developing state we understood the connection between home ownership and strong communities with a high quality of life.

I came across this book a few years ago. It is a reproduction of a book first published in 1870 called “Iowa: The Home for Immigrants.” In 1869 the Iowa Legislature appropriated funds to publish 65,000 copies of this book in five languages to be used to encourage immigrants to settle in Iowa.

It was considered a marketing tool and handbook for immigrants. It touted our rich land and favorable climate, abundant rivers and streams, our railroad system, our schools and institutions of higher learning, and our progressive civil rights (our General Assembly had just taken the first step in amending the constitution to give women the right to vote).

Of course, promoting land ownership was a primary marketing tool. There were two major ways to acquire land. One was to purchase land owned by the railroads, the other through homesteading.

Here’s an excerpt from a chapter: “In buying real estate the question of title is always one of vast importance to the purchaser. All lands sold by the railroad companies have been either conveyed directly to them by the Land Department at Washington, or to the State, and then by the State patented to the companies. The chain of title being so direct, there are no chances for any complications in this respect.”

In Iowa, to obtain a homestead, one had to make an affidavit before the Register or Receiver that his application was made for his exclusive use and benefit and for actual settlement and cultivation.

The book goes on to say: “In Iowa there is still room for many thousands more who may see proper to come and secure new homes at low prices on the broad rich prairies, with every reasonable assurance of health, wealth, education, and freedom for all who will only exercise ordinary industry. It should be the ambition of every young man of this country to own at least a small tract of land.”

This sense of owning the place we live is part of our common heritage as a state and it helps define who we are and our sense of community, and neighbor helping neighbor. It’s deep in our collective roots.

We are proud of the fact that in Iowa, we do things a little differently. Title Guaranty was created 20 years ago to facilitate lenders’ sales of home mortgages to the secondary market, but its role in maintaining the integrity of the Iowa land-title transfer system is its most valuable function. Protecting Iowa’s clean title records is important to all of us and it’s important to our home buyers. It is just one more way we can promote quality of life in our state—and encourage people to want to live and work here—to make their home here. This is really part of who we are as Iowans and we’ve been telling this story for a long time.

Lately, we have received some very positive national attention focused on our title guaranty system. Regulators around the country are investigating title insurance operations within their states and are looking to Iowa as an example. Locally, there have been some real estate scandals that would not have happened had Iowa Title Guaranty been a part of the process. That one element of consumer protection was missing from the transaction, and it cost those home owners dearly.

We need to remember that the most important piece of the transaction is the home owner. Many people buy a house and never realize they should be concerned about whether or not they are truly getting a clean title. They don’t realize problems can occur when they sell if they didn’t get clean title when they bought. We’ve been fortunate that Iowa has the well-deserved reputation for clean land title records. And it started over 125 years ago.

Looking forward, maintaining the integrity of the Iowa land transfer system will be vital to Iowa homeowners as well as the industry.

Title Guaranty provides millions of dollars in grants to help borrowers overcome that common barrier to home ownership: having enough cash for down payment and closing costs. Using Title Guaranty in the real estate transaction keeps more money in Iowa, helping Iowa’s home buyers.

Thank you for all you do to support the growth of home ownership in Iowa and for taking this time to learn more about some of the valuable programs that can help your customers achieve their dreams.

You are part of a long legacy that values home ownership and understands its contribution to Iowa’s strong communities and superior quality of life. For that, I thank you.”

## Featured Endorsement

*This issue’s featured endorsement is the Location Endorsement, Form 452 (CLTA Equivalent 116). The Location Endorsement is a residential endorsement used for subdivided land. It certifies the mailing address of the property and the type of structure located on the property. The Location Endorsement is not suited for use in connection with condominium properties.*

*At a minimum, Title Guaranty requires either the Uniform Residential Appraisal Report (if the mortgage is \$500,000 or less) or the Real Property Inspection Report (if the mortgage is more than \$500,000) to verify the address of the property and structure type. A legible plat of subdivision is optional, but Title Guaranty encourages its submission.*

*If the property is unsubdivided or is rural property, the Location Endorsement can be amended to provide coverage for that property “according to a survey.”*

*The Location Endorsement traditionally has been issued to lenders only. However, Title Guaranty has expanded its use for owners when a survey is provided.*

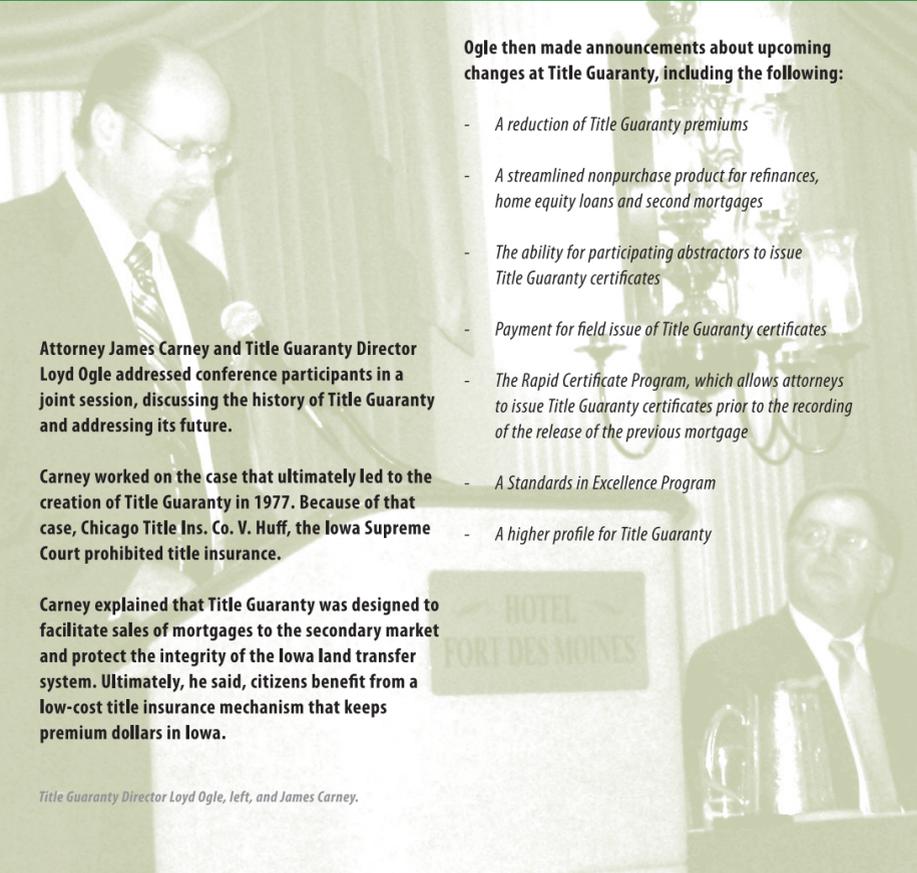
## DON’T MISS OUT!

*ON THE MOVE WILL SOON ARRIVE IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT.*

*We want to make sure you are included in our mailing list.*

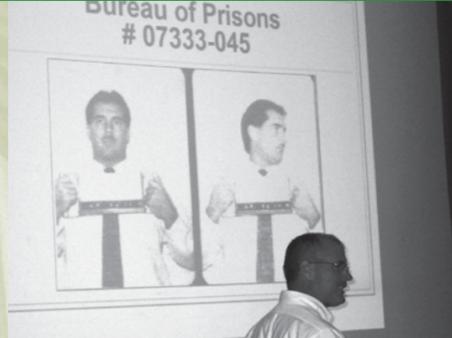
**Please send your current e-mail address to Susan Riedinger at: [susan.riedinger@iowa.gov](mailto:susan.riedinger@iowa.gov)**

## “ FOR MOST IOWANS, THE KEY TO CREATING PERSONAL WEALTH BEGINS WITH THE PURCHASE OF THEIR FIRST HOME.” Lt. Governor Sally Pederson



**Ogle then made announcements about upcoming changes at Title Guaranty, including the following:**

- A reduction of Title Guaranty premiums
- A streamlined nonpurchase product for refinances, home equity loans and second mortgages
- The ability for participating abstractors to issue Title Guaranty certificates
- Payment for field issue of Title Guaranty certificates
- The Rapid Certificate Program, which allows attorneys to issue Title Guaranty certificates prior to the recording of the release of the previous mortgage
- A Standards in Excellence Program
- A higher profile for Title Guaranty



*Kevin Barnes, luncheon speaker, shows conferees his federal mug shot after he was arrested on fraud charges. Barnes has since taken his experience on the road, becoming a nationally known speaker on mortgage fraud.*

**Kevin Barnes, an expert on mortgage fraud, was the luncheon speaker and the highlight of the first annual Title Guaranty conference. His theme was “Making the Right Choice.” A dynamic and enthusiastic speaker, Barnes spent five years in federal prison for mortgage fraud. Consequently, he lost his career, home, life savings and car.**

Barnes now teaches lenders and law enforcement officials to look for “red flags” in fraudulent transactions. He discussed areas where fraud could happen, anywhere from the loan officer’s interview with the borrower to changing a square foot or two on an appraisal report. He advised attendees to be proactive and not reactive when it comes to mortgage fraud.

### Title Guaranty Division Guarantees Title to USDA Wetlands

Since 1995, Title Guaranty has been a partner with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to guarantee title to property in Iowa that is enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program of the NRCS.

Between 1995 and August 2005, Title Guaranty has issued more than 900 owner’s certificates. Title Guaranty coverage for wetlands in that 10-year period is more than \$133 million, and the total premium generated by wetlands coverage exceeds \$154,000. As USDA funding for Wetlands Reserve Program easements in Iowa remains strong, Title Guaranty anticipates these numbers will grow.

The Wetlands Reserve Program is one of many programs managed by the NRCS and funded by the USDA. The purpose of the Wetlands Reserve Program is “[t]o develop and implement a conservation plan for restoration of wetlands previously altered for agricultural use.”<sup>1</sup> Wetlands were restored, enhanced or created on 6,377 acres in Iowa during fiscal year 2004 with assistance from the Wetlands Reserve Program. Wetlands benefit the nation by providing fish and wildlife habitat; improving water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals; reducing flooding; recharging groundwater; protecting biological diversity; as well as providing opportunities for educational, scientific and recreational activities. In Iowa since 1992, more than 126,000 acres of wetlands have been restored or are in the process of being restored under these programs. The chart below shows the top 20 counties in Iowa according to number of acres enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program since 1992.<sup>1</sup>

RANK	COUNTY NAME	# OF ACRES	RANK	COUNTY NAME	# OF ACRES
1	Fremont	7764.6	11	Muscatine	3353.5
2	Louisa	7353.7	12	Jasper	3274.2
3	Appanoose	6467.3	13	Wayne	3247.7
4	Winnebago	5904.5	14	Benton	3187.0
5	Tama	5855.3	15	Van Buren	3130.3
6	Palo Alto	5786.0	16	Clay	3015.3
7	Iowa	5416.8	17	Worth	3008.7
8	Polk	4958.3	18	Butler	2356.7
9	Warren	4051.7	19	Washington	2191.6
10	Woodbury	3478.1	20	Plymouth	2141.4

Title Guaranty is proud of its role in assisting the NRCS to restore Iowa’s wetlands heritage. For more information about the Wetlands Reserve Program and other conservation programs, visit [www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov).

<sup>1</sup> Information reprinted with permission from the NRCS Iowa state web site.

*Title Guaranty Director Loyd Ogle, left, and James Carney.*